

## CHRONOLOGICAL NOTES ON BYZANTINE DOCUMENTS VI<sup>1</sup>

### 63. Consulates and Postconsulates

The mass of evidence concerning the use of consular dating in Egypt assembled in *CSBE* Appendix D<sup>2</sup> has considerable interest for various questions. One of these is the problem of the dissemination of knowledge of who the consuls for a year were: how did the news, once announced in the capital (for our purposes, Constantinople), travel to the scribes in the metropoleis and villages who prepared the documents which have survived to the present? The question is a large one and in considerable part an unanswerable one, because most of the levels of administration through which such information must have passed are not represented in our documents. The problem deserves to be studied in its entirety, not only for Egypt but for the whole empire.

Our purpose here is more limited; we aim to set out some of the information derivable from the papyri pertinent to this question, in the hope that our remarks will lead a competent scholar to integrate this material into a broader synthesis which we cannot undertake here.

<sup>1</sup> For the purpose and nature of these notes, see *BASP* 15 (1978) 233. We cite our own works as follows: *CSBE* = *Chronological Systems of Byzantine Egypt* (Stud. Amst. 8, Zutphen 1978); *RFBE* = *Regnal Formulas in Byzantine Egypt* (*BASP* Suppl. 2, Missoula [MT] 1979); *CNBD* = "Chronological Notes on Byzantine Documents," in *BASP* 15 (1978) 233-46 and following (i.e. the present series of notes).

<sup>2</sup> Addenda and corrigenda in *RFBE* 75-79.

*A. Overlap of Consulate and Postconsulate*

In a certain number of cases, it appears that the last attestation of a postconsular date to the consuls of year  $x$  is later than the first attestation of the consulate of year  $x + 1$ . On examination, the situation turns out to be not so simple as it might appear.

A.D. 319	p.c. Licinius V and Crispus I	<i>P.Col.</i> VII 185.17 (21.i)
	cos. Constantinus V and	<i>P.Flor.</i> I 60.11 = <i>P.Sakaon</i>
	Licinius Caesar I	20 (19.i)

The Columbia papyrus comes from Karanis, the Florentine one from Theadelphia. But the Karanis text is a receipt issued by a resident of the metropolis to the tenant living in Karanis, and it is not clear where it was written. *P.Flor.* 60 is a tax receipt written by a *bouleutes* to a taxpayer in Theadelphia; the writer, as a metropolitan of a high class, should have had current information. At all events, minor local variations in transmission time or personal whereabouts can be responsible for this small overlap.

A.D. 346	p.c. Amantius and Albinus	<i>P.Lond.</i> III 1249.22 (p. 227)
	cos. Constantius IV and	(5.v)
	Constans III	<i>P.Abinn.</i> 47.20 (1.v)

The Abinnaeus text is Arsinoite, while the London papyrus is of Hermopolite origin. The small discrepancy can be explained on grounds of the distance between the nomes.

A.D. 396	p.c. Olybrius and Probinus	<i>P.Oxy.</i> VIII 1133.1 (24.iii)
	cos. Arcadius IV and	<i>SB</i> XII 10932.1 (6.iii)
	Honorius II	

*SB* 10932 is a scrap of which the provenance is unknown. The day numeral (Phamenoth 10) is dotted, but Dr. S. Daris assures us that it is certain and that another digit may have followed. It does not seem possible to draw any conclusions on grounds of provenance. It should, however, be noted that ὑπατείας is restored, and while the resultant 22-letter restoration corresponds well enough with the 24 letters in line 2, μετὰ τὴν ὑπατείαν would increase the count only to 28, which does not seem impossible. A papyrus in Vienna, in fact, *P.Vindob.inv.*G 22067 + 20784 ined. (which Worp will publish with the kind permission of the Austrian National Library), preserves a date to the postconsulate of Olybrius and Probinus, Mesore 1, i.e. attesting the p.c. still on 25.vii.396. The strong likelihood is thus that *SB* 10932 should be restored as p.c. and dated to 397. This year thus ceases to be an example of overlap.

A.D. 434 p.c. Theodosius XIV and Fl. Maximus *P.Lond.* V 1777.1 (7.ix)  
 cos. Fl. Ariobindus and Asper *P.Stras.* I 1.1 (20.viii)

*P.Lond.* V 1777 is a receipt from the Oxyrhynchite; most of the phrase [μετὰ τὴν ὑπατ]ε[ίαν] is restored, but the length of the restoration in line 4 seems sufficient guarantee of its correctness. (In line 2, we prefer the editor's alternate restoration: [τὸ ἰδ' καὶ Φλ(αουίου) Μαξι]μου.) *P.Stras.* I poses problems. Preisigke restored this Hermopolite text as follows (lines 1-2):

1 [Βασιλείας Φλα]ουίων Ἀριοβίντ[ου] καὶ Ἀσπερος τῶν μεγ(ίστων)  
 (ἔτους) . . . .  
 Μεσορῇ κζ δ' ἐν(δικτίονος).

He dated the text to A.D. 510. Wilcken (*Archiv* 5 [1913] 252) correctly restored ὑπατείας, which led him to a date of 506; but he pointed out that this date would not agree with the indiction. Hohmann suggested therefore μετὰ τὴν ὑπατείαν and referred the text to 435 (*Zur Chronologie der Papyrusurkunden*, 38; cf. *BL* I 403), but Preisigke objected that there was no room for this, and he concluded (*BL* I 403), "ich weiss keinen Ausweg."

Hohmann is certainly right in thinking that we have a reference to the consuls of 434; the indiction (confirmed by the very likely partial restoration of the next indiction as the fifth in line 9) points to a date in 435, as he said, and given the conflict which results if the papyrus is assigned to 434, we think a date in 435 is almost certain. Ὑπατείας is then an error for μετὰ τὴν ὑπατείαν (a very common error, cf. *CSBE* 52-54). *P.Oxy.* XVI 1879, which also attests the consuls of 434, has no absolute date and presumably comes from later than 7.ix.434, but before the end of the year.

A.D. 441 p.c. Anatolius *P.Mil.* I 64.1 (6.xii)  
 cos. Cyrus *BGU* II 609.1 (12.xi)

*BGU* 609 is dated to the eleventh indiction, thus 442/3 (that is, 12.xi.442). As no papyri for 442 are yet published, it is not possible to say if the consuls of that year (known from a p.c. in *P.Oxy.* VI 913, cf. *Mnemosyne* 31 [1978] 289 n. 9) were announced locally during that year. *BGU* 609 is Arsinoite, while *P.Mil.* 64 is Oxyrhynchite. As no explanation on grounds of location is possible, it seems likely that the indiction is right in *BGU* 609 (our remarks on p. 54 of *CSBE* are to be cancelled). But in any case, this pair is not solid evidence for our question. (It should be pointed out that in *P.Mil.* 64 the p.c. is our restoration in *ZPE* 28 [1978] 226, but we consider it certain.)

A.D. 462 p.c. Dagalaiphus and Severinus *PSI* III 175.1 (20.ix)  
 cos. Leo II and Fl. [ ] *M. Chr.* 71.19 (14.vii)

The addition of a second consul in *M. Chr.* 71 is contrary to the phrase with Leo alone in *P. Vindob. Sijp.* 7.1 and the p.c. of Leo alone in *SPP XX* 127 (or both p.c., if, as we suggest in *CNBD* III 32, *P. Vindob. Sijp.* 7 belongs to the p.c. also). The time difference here is far too great to make a locational explanation plausible; but the second consul raises doubts which make us unsure of the nature of the problem here. [From a photograph of *M. Chr.* 71 kindly provided by R. Jäger (Leipzig), we observe that the numeral β (= II) for Leo's consulate is very dubious. A reading γ' (cos. Leo III = A.D. 466) does not seem excluded; if it is correct, the problem of overlap in A.D. 462 would disappear.]

A.D. 472 p.c. Leo IV and Probinianus *P. Lond.* V 1793.2 (1.xii)  
 cos. Marcianus and to be *BGU XII* 2150.1 (8.xi)  
 announced

As both texts are Hermopolite, an argument by location is not possible. But the London text is dated to the tenth indiction (471/2), which would yield a date of 1.xii.471, a year earlier than the consulate points to (cf. *CSBE* 65 n. 15). The only papyrus of 471 is *P. Bad.* IV 91 b.14 (24.iii), dated to the p.c. of Jordanes and Severus (i.e. of 470). One might surmise that *P. Lond.* 1793 was mistakenly dated p.c. rather than cos.; in a century when p.c. datings are the rule, the scribe might be pardoned for assuming that any new consuls were already out of office. This, however, is the reverse of the normal error,<sup>3</sup> and we remain uncertain what has happened.

A.D. 476 p.c. Leo Jr. I, deceased *BGU XII* 2151.2 (19.x)  
 cos. Zenon and Armatus *SB* III 7167.2 (4.x)

Both texts are Hermopolite. *SB* 7167 is restored as p.c. by the editors (thus 477), as consulate by J. R. Rea, in his note on *CPR* V 15.1 (which is dated by p.c. Armatus in vi.477). Rea provides a clear discussion of the problems of consular dates in this turbulent period. The restoration of the consulate, however, seems uncertain, as Rea's restoration for line 2 requires 21 letters, vs. the 29 in the nearest securely restorable line (6). Restoring with the editors *μετὰ τὴν ὑπατείαν*, on the other hand, gives 28. Given the insecurity of the restoration and the paucity of our knowledge for these years, it seems best to renounce any use of this pair for our question. [P. Köln III 152 brings new evidence to bear on this problem and supports, we believe, our doubts about Rea's restoration. See the editors' introduction.]

<sup>3</sup> See our remarks in *Mnemosyne* 31 (1978) 288.

A.D. 534 p.c. Justinianus III  
cos. Justinianus IV

*P.Stras.* 472.2 (xi-xii)<sup>4</sup>  
*SB* VIII 9876.1 (16.vii)

*SB* 9876 is Herakleopolite, *P.Stras.* 472 Hermopolite; obviously location will not account for the discrepancy. The postconsulate in the Strasbourg papyrus is based on restoration. As the editor remarks (note to line 2), "Cette ligne a dû commencer légèrement plus à gauche que les suivantes." Now the projecting to the left of the heading of a papyrus (address, dating formula) is a common phenomenon, but in this case it would remove the difficulty of the overlap of consulate and postconsulate if one restores instead the consulate of 533. The other documents dated to 533 do not form an obstacle to this hypothesis, as the latest document known from this year is *SBI* 4663 (8.x; dated by the postconsulate of the consuls of 530, cf. *CSBE* 51).

An obstacle is, however, presented by the mention in line 12 of the coming fourteenth indiction. As the editor aptly remarks in his introduction, "notre ligne 12 nous renvoie à la 13e indiction (534-535)." *P.Stras.* 472 contains a lease for two years from the crops of the coming fourteenth indiction; it is axiomatic that a lease will not begin at a set date without including the next crop to be harvested.<sup>5</sup> As the lease concerns grain land, the crop of the coming fourteenth indiction should have been sown in the fall of 534. This would conflict with a hypothetical dating of the papyrus in 533.

We have a choice, then, between the restoration of a postconsulate which is a bit long and causes the above conflict with *SB* 9876; or the restoration of consulate, in which case this conflict is removed, but we are left with an indiction number which is, by normal practices, unexpected. In any case, the problem is such that this pair is also not very useful for the question.

Of the nine cases examined, three (A.D. 396, 476, 534) involve texts where *ὑπατείας* or *μετὰ τὴν ὑπατείαν* is restored and there may be doubt about the correctness of the restoration. In three cases (434, 441, 472), the indiction contradicts the consular date, leading to uncertainty about the true date of the document. In the case of A.D. 462, the consular formula is

<sup>4</sup> The papyrus is dated to Choiak (xi-xii). The name of the month is followed by a diagonal stroke. A numeral of the day seems to have been omitted, but one wonders if one should not read *Χοία(κ) κ/*, i.e. 20 Choiak = 16/17.xii.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. *CSBE* 9 n. 2; Comfort, *Aegyptus* 14 (1934) 432 foot; J. Herrmann, *Bodenpacht* 98. Seeming exceptions are documents in the form of a *μισθαποχή*, which appear to have been contracted usually after the point at which a field could be planted for the nearest harvest: *CPR* I 247 (7.iv.335, for ind. 10 = 336/7); *P.Gen.* 66 (2.v.374, for ind. 5 = 376/7), 67 (19.i.382 or 383 [cf. *CSBE* 52], for ind. 13 = 384/5), and 69 (386; crops of ind. 15 = 386/7); *P.Gron.* 9 (20.iv.392, for ind. 7 = 393/4).

aberrant and we cannot be sure what the situation actually is. In only two cases, then (319, 346) do we actually have a certainly observable overlap, by two and four days only, and in both cases the location of the scribe seems easily sufficient as an explanation. We conclude, therefore, that so far as present evidence shows, the dissemination of knowledge of consulates was as uniform throughout Egypt as its geography allows once the news reached the country. It appears, therefore, that the local bureaucracy is not at fault in the cases of tardiness of transmission of the news of the announcement of consuls.

*B. The Date of the Announcement of Consulates in Egypt*

Within reasonable limits, then, evidence from any part of Egypt can be used for the question of when consulates were announced in that province. The evidence is not so abundant as to allow the pinpointing of the announcement in most years; the most useful tool seems to be the date of the last attestation of the *previous* consulate for each year. These dates provide a rough *terminus post quem* for the announcement of the new consuls; in any given case, new evidence may of course come to move the *terminus* later. The following tabulation includes years from 314 to 541; in cases where the exact day is not known but the range can be narrowed, the year is listed under the *earliest* month possible. [Years followed by *a* or *b* refer to years in which a p.c. of an earlier year was replaced by a p.c. of the immediately preceding year during the course of the year.]

January: 315, 316, 319, 325, 328, 342, 355, 373, 374, 383?, 386, 392, 480, 496a, 500

February: 314, 339, 340, 345, 350, 360, 377, 453, 463, 492 [ZPE 30 (1978) 205], 497, 517, 518, 534, 538, 539

March: 336, 337, 393, 396, 409, 418, 427, 445, 455, 471, 481a, 498, 503, 535, 540

April: 395, 428, 493, 524

May: 346, 380, 387, 389, 403, 410, 432, 475, 484, 489, 509 (cf. CNBD VII 65 [forthcoming])

June: 399, 400, 407, 417, 423, 448, 458, 477, 531

July: 351, 382, 398, 419, 421, 439, 465, 501, 505, 516

August: 402, 415, 422, 449, 454, 456, 483, 487, 506, 527

September: 412, 434, 435, 461, 462, 470, 486, 488, 510, 526, 532, 541

October: 364, 379, 426, 443, 444, 468, 476, 481b, 491, 504, 514, 533, 537

November: 375, 385, 420, 430, 436, 446, 464, 495, 496b, 508

December: 441, 472, 485, 494, 536

Although no exact reliance can be placed in statistics based on evidence of the sort we possess, the distribution seems sufficiently spread

out to make it clear that the news of the new consuls could arrive at any time of year. A breakdown by centuries, however, clarifies this conclusion:

	<i>IVp</i>	<i>Vp</i>	<i>VIp</i>	<i>Total</i>
January	12	3	0	15
February	7	4	5	16
March	4	8	3	15
April	1	2	1	4
May	4	6	1	11
June	2	6	1	9
July	3	4	3	10
August	0	8	2	10
September	0	8	4	12
October	2	7	4	13
November	2	7	1	10
December	0	4	1	5

It is obvious that in the fourth century more *termini* fall in January–February than in all other months together, and this picture is consistent with a situation in which the consuls were normally proclaimed near the end of the old julian year or soon after the start of the new. In the fifth century, on the other hand, the median is between July and August, and in the sixth in July: there is no longer any preference for the early months of the year, quite the reverse in fact. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the news of the new consuls reached Egypt much later than in the fourth century (as the high number of fifth century postconsulates shows in itself) and that the amount of delay followed no observable pattern.

### C. Consuls yet to be Announced

In seven years we find in a consular formula the name of a consul plus *καὶ τοῦ δηλωθησομένου/ἀποδειχθησομένου* or its Latin equivalent. These are the following:

- |     |  |   |
|-----|--|---|
| 453 | p.c. Sporacius καὶ τῶν ἀπὸ τῆς Ἰταλίας δηλωθησομένου | <i>P. Vindob. Sijp.</i> 11.1 (17.ii)  |
| 461 | p.c. Apollonii et qui nuntiatus fuerit               | <i>P. Oxy.</i> XVI 1878.1 (1.ix)  |
| 464 | p.c. Vivianus καὶ τοῦ ἀποδ./δηλ.                     | <i>BGU XII</i> 2147.1 (7.x)<br><i>P. Oxy.</i> VI 902.19 (20.xi) (cf. <i>CSBE</i> 52 n. 4) |
| 472 | cos. Marcianus καὶ τοῦ ἀποδ.                         | <i>BGU XII</i> 2150.1 (8.xi)  |
| 481 | p.c. Basilius καὶ τοῦ ἀποδ.                          | <i>P. Lond.</i> III 991 (p. 258) (cf. <i>CNBD</i> IV 40)                                  |

- 483 p.c. Trocondus καὶ τοῦ δηλ. *P.Lond.* V 1896.1 (vi–vii)  
*BGU* XII 2156.2 (27.viii)  
 501 p.c. Patricius (& Hypatius) *P.Amst.* I 45.2 (7.vii)  
 καὶ τοῦ δηλ.

Similar dates where the name of the first consul is lacking are *SPPXX* 146 and *SB* I 5264 (to be republished as *P.Amst.* I 45a).

In every case except that of 501 we are dealing with a year in which only one consul was proclaimed and recognized in Egypt; in some cases no second consul was proclaimed at all (481, 483). That the missing consul is normally the western one is made clear by *P.Vindob.Sijp.* 11 (despite the erroneous τῶν for τοῦ).<sup>6</sup> In no case do we find later that the second person was proclaimed.

The text of 501, *P.Amst.* I 45, is a peculiar case. The scribe has written μετὰ τὴν ὑπατείαν Φλ. Πατρικίου τοῦ μαικαλοπρεπεστάτου (ἰ.μεγαλο-) καὶ ἐνδοξοτάτου στρατηκοῦ καὶ ὑπάτου καὶ τοῦ δηλωθησομαίνου. The scribe has transformed the name of the second consul Hypatius (already known in Egypt on 15.ix.500: *P.Oxy.* XVI 1962.1) into the title ὑπάτου, consul (nonsensically: who but a consul would be consul!); he has then felt the need of a second consul and added the “to be designated” phrase.

#### *D. Constantinople vs. Egypt*

If the dissemination of consular names within Egypt seems to have been rather uniform, as we have argued, where does the peculiarly even distribution of *termini post quem* over the julian year in the fifth and sixth centuries come from? One possible approach to the question is through the legal codes. The imperial enactments contained in the *Codex Justinianus* and *Codex Theodosianus* mostly have consular dates and month and day. Where these have not been tampered with by the editors of the codes, they provide evidence of at what dates the consulates were known in the imperial court, generally Constantinople in the eastern empire. A few other sources, like records of church councils, give evidence for consulates in some years.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> But see *P.Lond.* III 991 (cf. *CNBD* IV 40). For *P.Vindob.Sijp.* 11 cf. R. Pintaudi, *ZPE* 24 (1977) 222. For the subject treated here and below, Th. Mommsen, “Ostgothische Studien I: Die Consulardatierung des getheilten Reiches,” *Historische Schriften* III (Berlin 1910) 363–87, remains fundamental.

<sup>7</sup> For difficulties in comparing this type of material to papyri and in using it generally, see O. Seeck's introduction to his *Regesten der Kaiser und Päpste für die Jahre 311 bis 476* (Stuttgart 1919) and our remarks in *Mnemosyne* 31 (1978) 287–93. We depend for this material on Seeck.



The list below includes each year in which the latest reference in the papyri to the postconsulate of the (a) preceding year is two months or more later than the earliest reference in legal sources and similar materials to the consulate of the current year; in this way, all chance that *only* the time involved in getting news to Egypt is responsible has been eliminated.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Latest reference to p.c.</i>	<i>Earliest reference to cos.</i>
346	ZPE 23 (1977) 139.1 (5.iii)	CTh 10.10.8 (5.v)
364	PSI I 90.1 (17.x)	CTh 13.3.6 (11.i)
375	P.Lips. 61.1 (11.xi)	CTh 12.6.16 (9.iv)
379	P.Lips. 13.1 (23.x)	CTh 6.30.1 (24.ii)
380	CPR VII 19.1 (6.v)	CJ 1.54.4 (6.i)
382	SB IV 7445.1 (12.vii)	CTh 14.10.1 (12.i)
385	P.Lips. 62 ii.17 (4.xi)	CJ 1.55.4 (1-5.i)
387	Aegyptus 54 (1974) 83.1 (28.v)	CTh 13.3.13 (22.i)
389	P.Lips. 37.1 (5.v)	CTh 15.14.8 (14.i)
395	CPR V 13.28 (17.iv)	CTh 2.1.8 (6.i)
396	P.Oxy. VIII 1133.1 (24.iii) (cf. supra, p.28)	CTh 15.13 (6.i)
398	P.Herm. 52.1, 53.1 (4.vii)	CTh 7.1.16 (28.i)
399	P.Giss. 104.1 (30.vi)	CTh 11.24.4 (10.iii)
402	P.Grenf. II 80.1 (4.viii)	CTh 16.5.30 (3.iii)
407	P.Oxy. VIII 1122.1 (9.vi)	CTh 6.26.13 (25.i)
410	P.Herm. 69.1 (5.v)	CTh 16.5.48 (21.ii)
412	P.Mich. XI 611.1 (27.ix)	CTh 7.17 (28.i)
415	P.Mich. XI 613.1 (19.viii)	CTh 3.1.9 (17.ii)
417	P.Berl.Zill. 5.1 (15.vi)	CTh 8.12.9 (14.iii)
418	P.Köln II 102.1 (30.iii or 9.iv)	CTh 16.2.43 (3.ii)
419	PSI XIII 1365.2 (6.vii)	CTh 11.30.66 (8.iii)
420	PSI XIII 1340.1 (18.xi)	CJ 8.10.10 (5.v)
422	SPP XX 118.3 (29.viii)	CTh 6.32.2 (12.i)
423	PSI I 87.1 (29.vi)	CTh 8.4.35 (14.ii)
426	P.Oslo II 35.1 (6.x)	CTh 9.41.1, 42.24 (23.i)
428	P.Flor. III 314.1 (27.iv)	CTh 6.2.26, 27.22 (31.i)
430	BGU XII 2138.1 (16.xi)	CTh 10.10.34 (22.ii)
434	P.Lond. V 1777.1 (7.ix)	CTh 5.12.3, 11.28.15 (18.vi)
435	P.Flor. III 315.1 (ix-x?)	CTh 6.28.8 (29.i)
436	PSI VI 708.1 (2.xi)	CTh 10.20.18 (8.iii)
439	CPR VI 6.1 (8.vii)	Nov.Theod. 7.1 (20.i)
441	P.Mil. I 64.1 (6.xii) (cf. supra, p. 29)	Nov.Theod. 7.4 (6.iii)
443	P.Oxy. VI 913.1 (16.x)	CJ 1.46.3 (28.i)

444	<i>P.Harr.</i> 86.15 (8.x)	<i>Nov.Theod.</i> 25 (16.i)
448	<i>P.Flor.</i> III 311.1 (24.vi)	Mansi VII 197 (25.ii; cf. Seeck 425.33)
449	<i>P.Flor.</i> III 313.1 (12.viii)	<i>CJ</i> 5.17.8 (9.i)
454	<i>SB X</i> 10523.1 (4.viii)	<i>Nov.Marc.</i> 4 (4.iv)
456	<i>P.Yale</i> I 71.1 (28.viii)	<i>CJ</i> 1.3.25, 1.4.13 (25.iii)
468	<i>P.Wisc.</i> I 10.1 (10.x)	<i>CJ</i> 1.14.10, 12.21.7 (8.ii)
470	<i>BGU XII</i> 2149.2 (19.ix)	<i>CJ</i> 5.27.4 (1.i)
472	<i>P.Lond.</i> V 1793.2 (1.xii) (cf. supra, p. 30)	<i>CJ</i> 8.37.10 (1.i)
486	<i>CPR V</i> 16.2 (16.ix)	<i>CJ</i> 4.20.14 (21.v)
505	<i>P.Stras.</i> 471 bis.1 (16.vii)	<i>CJ</i> 2.7.22 (1.i)
527	<i>P.Lond.</i> V 1690.1 (30.viii)	<i>CJ</i> 1.31.5 (22.iv)
533	<i>SB I</i> 4663.1 (8.x)	<i>CJ</i> 1.1.6 (15.iii)

In general, it does not seem possible to argue that all of the wide gaps found are due either to retroactive editorial insertion of consulates in the codes, or to the time required for transmission of news from Constantinople to Egypt and its local diffusion there. Nor does the season of the year (i.e. usable for sailing or not) seem an explanation. While all three of these may account for certain individual instances, the bulk is too large to admit such explanations. The conclusion that significant delays occurred in the bureaucracy appears necessary to us.<sup>8</sup> It is our hope that a scholar competent in Byzantine history and institutions will try to set the information we have gathered and analyzed into its place in the historical record.

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<sup>8</sup> Cf. O. Seeck's remarks (supra, n. 7) 15 and his introduction generally. We see no basis for any suggestion that the scribes of individual papyri varied because of personal whim.